

Message Text

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13

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 H-03 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00

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FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3380

UNCLAS SEOUL 2447

FOLLOWING SENT ACTION TO TAIPEI FROM SEOUL APRIL 17
REPEATED FOR YOUR INFO.

FOR CODEL O'NEILL

E.O. 11652: N/A

SUBJ: CURRENT REACTION REPORT SEOUL APR 17

TV REPORTS: TUESDAY EVENING TV NEWS GAVE TOP PLAY TO VISITING
CODEL'S ACTIVITIES: CODEL'S COURTESY CALL ON PRESIDENT PARK,
DINNER PARTY BY PREMIER KIM, AND PRESIDENT PARK'S CONFERRING
THE ORDER OF DIPLOMATIC SERVICE MERIT ON REP. O'NEILL.

PRESS REPORTS: PRESS GAVE WIDE COVERAGE TO CODEL'S VISIT TO
SEOUL WITH REPORTS AS FOLLOWS. AT MONDAY NIGHT RECEPTION,
SPEAKER CHUNG EXPRESSED THANKS FOR THE MATERIAL AND SPIRITUAL
ASSISTANCE RENDERED BY THE AMERICANS IN SUPPORT OF THE ROK
AND IN REPLY REP. O'NEILL REMARKED IN PART THAT THE AMERICANS
WANT TO CONFIRM WHETHER THE KOREAN PEOPLE SHARE AMERICA'S
FAITH IN DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT AND INSTITUTIONS. AT TUESDAY
DINNER, PREMIER KIM SAID "SOME OF OUR FRIENDS SEEM TO WORRY
ABOUT OUR WAY OF LIFE WE ARE LEADING TO SURVIVE THE DIFFICUL-
TIES THREATENING US BUT OUR ULTIMATE GOAL IS TO BUILD A MODEL
DEMOCRACY AND WE ARE CONFIDENT THAT WE WILL BE ABLE TO BUILD
ONE WHICH OUR FRIENDS CAN BE PROUD OF."

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WEDNESDAY MORNING, KOREAN ASSEMBLYMEN AND AMERICAN CONGRESSMEN

HAD A PANEL DISCUSSION ON SOUTH-NORTH TALKS, ROK'S SECURITY AND ROK-US ECONOMIC COOPERATION. IN HIS OPENING SPEECH, SPEAKER CHUNG SAID, "KOREA'S NEED FOR AMERICAN ASSISTANCE WAS NEVER GREATER THAN NOW WHEN NORTH KOREA IS INTENSIFYING PROVOCATIONS AGAINST THE ROK." DETAILS OF THE CLOSED MEETING WERE NOT KNOWN BUT THE DONGA ILBO SAID THAT THEY WERE REPORTED TO HAVE DISCUSSED ROK'S INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL SITUATION.

EDITORIAL COMMENT: LEADING DONG-A ILBO SAID, "WE EARNESTLY HOPE THAT DURING THE STAY HERE, THEY WILL BE ABLE TO GRASP THE COMPLETE REALITY OF THIS COUNTRY, SO THAT THEY CAN FURTHER CONSOLIDATE THE ROK-US TIES BASED ON WHAT THEY SAW..." AN IMPORTANT DAILY, JOONGANG ILBO, COMMENTED, "IN VIEW OF THE POLITICAL AND DIPLOMATIC CHALLENGES FACING THE ROK AND THE U.S. ALIKE, THE VISIT TO SEOUL OF A LARGE GROUP OF AMERICAN CONGRESSMEN TAKES ON SPECIAL SIGNIFICANCE. NORTH KOREA RECENTLY UNILATERALLY ABANDONED THE JULY 4 SOUTH-NORTH TALKS AND IS CURRENTLY VIOLATING THE MOST FUNDAMENTAL ARMISTICE AGREEMENTS. AS IT IS APPARENT THAT NORTH KOREA'S PRIMARY OBJECTIVE AT THIS MOMENT IS DIRECTED AT CAUSING CRACKS IN ROK-US RELATIONS AND AT SPLITTING AMERICAN PUBLIC OPINION ON KOREA, WE HOPE THAT PARLIAMENTARIANS OF OUR TWO COUNTRIES WOULD EXPLORE WAYS TO COPE WITH THE WILY NORTH KOREAN DESIGNS BY HOLDING EARNEST TALKS ON THE MATTER..."

OFFICIAL SEOUL QHINMUN SAID, "WE PLACE HIGH HOPES ON THE VISIT OF THE U.S. CODEL, BELIEVING THAT IT WILL CONTRIBUTE GREATLY TO BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF MUTUAL PROBLEMS AND CLOSER TIES. WE ASK THAT AMERICAN CONGRESSMEN DIRECT PRIMARY ATTENTION TO THE POTENTIAL DANGERS TO ROK SECURITY AND REAFFIRM THE ROK-US COMMON EFFORT TO REMOVE THEM..."

PRO-GOVERNMENT KYUNGHYANG SHINMUN SAID, "NEEDLESS TO SAY, NORTH KOREA'S RECENT DIRECT PEACE OVERTURE TO THE U.S. CONGRESS WAS NO MORE THAN A PART OF THEIR DISGUISED PEACE OFFENSIVE. APPARENTLY IT WAS INTENDED TO WEAKEN AND SPLIT SUPPORT OF THE ROK BY THE CONGRESS AND THE AMERICAN PUBLIC, AND INCREASE PRESSURE FOR THE WITHDRAWAL OF AMERICAN TROOPS FROM KOREA. WE THINK THAT THE U.S. CODEL'S VISIT WILL BE HIGHLY USEFUL IN CRUSHING THE WILY SCHEME OF NORTH KOREA."

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CHOSUN ILBO CARRIED FOLLOWING EDITORIAL COMMENT MN THE U.S. CODEL. "IT IS OUR FERVENT HOPE THAT ROK-US FRIENDSHIP AND ALLIANCE CONTINUE, AND RELATIONS IN THE POLITICAL, ECONOMIC, CULTURAL AND MILITARY FIELDS DEVELOP MORE DEEPLY. FOR KOREA, IT IS ESSENTIAL FOR NATIONAL SECURITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND FOR THE U.S., IT WOULD BE OF VITAL STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE IN PRESERVING PEACE IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC AREA WHICH ARE

VITAL TO AMERICA'S OWN SECURITY AND PROSPERITY. WE WANT TO POINT OUT THAT SOME MISLEADING PUBLIC OPINION WITHIN THE U.S., WHICH REFUSES TO RECOGNIZE THE POTENTIAL DANGER IN NORTH ASIA, COULD LEAD AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY TO A CATASTROPHIC RESULT."

OTHER NEWS: EXTRA-ORDINARY HIGHER MILITARY COURT TODAY SENTENCED FIVE UNIFICATION PARTY MEMBERS TO PRISON TERMS RANGING FROM TEN TO FIFTEEN YEARS FOR VIOLATION OF PRESIDENTIAL EMERGENCY DECREE. SEOUL DISTRICT CRIMINAL COURT TODAY OPENED A TRIAL OF ULUNGDO-BASED SPY RING AND THE RING LEADER CHUN PLEADED GUILTY OF HIS TWO TRIPS TO NORTH KOREA. SEOUL DISTRICT CRIMINAL COURT YESTERDAY HELD A THIRD SESSION OF TRIAL OF FIVE LITERARY WRITERS CHARGED WITH VIOLATING THE ANTI-COMMUNIST LAW AND DEFENDANT LEE HO-CHUL DENIED THE CHARGE THAT HE HAD CONTACTS WITH PUBLISHER OF "HOSTILE" MAGAZINE IN TOKYO, HANYANG, KNOWING THAT THE PUBLISHER WAS A NORTH KOREAN SPY. HABIB

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